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Ilene L. Ingram
Oakland University

Toni S. Walters
Oakland University

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A Critical Reflection Model to Teach Diversity and Social Justice

Ilene L. Ingram and Toni S. Walters

In the United States today, the fastest growing populations of public school students are collectively African American and Hispanic American, and the students who immigrate to the United States from Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and the Caribbean nations. And, at the same time, demographics are changing in our classrooms, the majority of teachers and administrators in the U. S. are White, live in the mainstream culture, and have limited cross-cultural experiences with groups other than their own. Teachers and administrators play key roles in ensuring students' success. There is a far greater need today for teachers and administrators to gain more knowledge about diversity and social justice if we, as a nation, are to realize high levels of learning for all students. To that aim, in this article, we report on the Social Justice Critical Reflection Model (SJCRM) that we developed to teach for diversity and social justice.

A common belief of many people is that schools are meritocracies that provide equal opportunity for all students, when in fact, "Public schools as organizations were never designed to teach all students, especially the children of the poor, to high level achievement" (Lezotte, 1994, p. 20). Too often, we forget that schools as formal institutions with ethnocentric monoculturalism are biased against racial minorities, damage and subvert their chances for equal access, and oppress those students who are culturally different (Cochran-Smith, 2004). The children who are poor and marginalized on the basis of race, culture, and ethnicity attend schools that are poorly staffed, often physically offensive, and under equipped for educational opportunities in the 21st century. Fifty years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, the achievement gap between students who are poor and overwhelmingly African American and their White student counterparts appreciably widened rather than narrowed (Kozol, 2005).

Ilene L. Ingram is an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Leadership at Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan. Her research interests include effective school leadership, especially as it intersects with issues of ethics, diversity, and social justice. Toni S. Walters is a professor in the Department of Reading and Language Arts at Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan. Her research and scholarly writing are in the areas of content literacy and cross-cultural critical literacy.

A political lens on schools moves us away from viewing these institutions as seemingly neutral. The decisions made about education, whether at the national, state, and district levels or by administrators and teachers, reflect the political ideology and worldview of the decision makers. Every decision, regardless of proclaimed neutrality, has a profound impact on educators who serve the system and the students at every level, including higher education, who are served by the educational system (Nieto, 1997; Hillard, 1991; Ogletree, 2007). Regardless of what legislative reforms are in vogue or which way the political winds are blowing, students who are poor and from minority groups continue to exist at the margins of classroom life (Singleton & Linton, 2006).

These are concerns that influenced our development of the theoretical Social Justice Critical Reflection Model (SJCRM) for teaching diversity and social justice. In this article we describe the five interrelated schemata of the SJCRM. We discuss our individual journeys implementing the SJCRM in our respective university courses. We conclude with a discussion about what we have come to understand about the ability of the SJCRM to encourage active intellectual processes for cultivating diversity understanding and social justice.

The Context of American Education Today

In the opening decade of the 21st century, schools in the United States are a contemporary concern. One of the substantial educational issues deals with the changing demographics in America's schools. The fastest growing populations of public school students are collectively African American, Hispanic American, and the students who immigrate to the United States from Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and the Caribbean nations. These diverse student groups do not share the ethnic, cultural, racial, or socioeconomic backgrounds of the majority of White, middle class, English-speaking teachers and administrators who have limited or no cross-cultural experiences with groups of people other than their own. A second substantial issue is that, at the same time, unresolved equity educational issues and the standards and accountability movement have resulted in unprecedented pressures to increase student learning. The expectation is for schools to educate all students at high academic levels and close the race achievement gap in this country.

Teachers and administrators are key agents in framing new supports for all students (Darling-Hammond, 2002; Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage, 2005; Lee, 2005). Today's student population reality creates a demographic imperative for teachers and administrators to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are necessary to respond to diversity and social justice, which are critical to realizing equitable learning environments.

Literature Review

Recently, a great deal of interest has been devoted to the barriers that continue to make academic achievement elusive for minority children and children who are poor. Kozol (2005) explicates, among other things, that, “Any vestige of the legal victory embodied in *Brown v. Board of Education* or the moral mandate that a generation of unselfish activists and young idealists lived and sometimes died for has survived” (p. 10). According to Levine (2005), diversity in the student body and the recent rise in segregated schooling by race and income are reshaping the educational landscape and school outcomes; yet, educational leadership preparation programs appear to be unaware of this phenomenon.

A growing body of literature, particularly among scholars who have been researching multiculturalism, provides information about the sociopolitical context of education and culturally responsive curriculum, teaching, and assessment (Bank, 1995; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Gay, 2003; Hilliard, 2004). A recurring theme found in the body of literature is the greater need for education preparation programs to expand on teachers’ and administrators’ learning about diversity and social justice and their implications for children whose racial, cultural, and ethnic identities subject them to discrimination and marginalization in our schools and society. Ingram and Flumerfelt (in press) maintain that diversity training matters for aspiring and practicing principals. Ladson-Billings (1994) calls attention to the need for teachers to have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to implement culturally relevant curriculum in democratic learning environments. Gay (2000) explicates, among other things, that too many practicing teachers possess negative attitudes toward the cultural diversity that exists in the classrooms. She refers to this problem as a demographic divide, creating a dichotomy between pedagogy and students’ needs. A study by Law and Lane (1987) reports pre-service teachers hold biased views and attitudes regarding various racial and ethnic groups. Brown’s (2004) investigation reports teacher education candidates enter and exit their programs maintaining many of the cultural biases and stereotypes they held upon entering the program. Nieto (2004) contends that it is difficult for teachers, who were products of educational systems that have a history of racism, exclusion, and debilitating pedagogy, to understand the chasm between democratic ideals and practice and the actions necessary to eliminate biased structures and policies. Cochran-Smith (1999) argues that changing attitudes to affect lasting social change and address America’s demographic imperative will take more than the traditional types of preparation offered in our teacher education programs to enable emancipatory orientations to judgment and reasoning for socially constructed purposes.

Historically those who have political and economic power covet their preeminence regarding knowledge construction (Banks, 1995, 2001; Sleeter,

1996). Ladson-Billings (2005) uses a powerful metaphorical image of the Big House when she describes institutional values, specifically those of departments, schools, and colleges of education that support the dominant culture. The theories of knowledge in the majority of adopted educational administration course textbooks privilege a white male perspective, and leadership actions and attributes are proposed from this limited and exclusive worldview. Feminist theory and critique, the voices of *critical* others, and a social justice focus are conspicuously absent in the educational administration knowledge discourse (Brown & Irby, 2006). The traditional course textbooks in our teacher education programs lack relevancy and applicability for teachers to foster diversity and do not provide a conceptual foundation for teachers to deliver some version of social justice.

Further, teacher education and educational administration preparation programs *suffer* from the overwhelming presence of *whiteness* in the student body (Sleeter, 2001) and do not challenge the uncritical habits of mind of students to question the cultural codes of their textbooks and race privilege in schools and society (Scholes, 1985; King, 1991). Because their cultural, social, and linguistic characteristics are misunderstood or misinterpreted, devalued, or left unaddressed by both teachers and administrators, many poor and minority students do not achieve academically at the levels of their White student counterparts (Irving, 1990; Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2000; King, 2005).

The organizational norms, rules, policies, and structures that account for the fact that some students are disfranchised and marginalized and others are unduly privileged calls into question concerns about ethics. Ingram and Morehead (in press) push this concept even further arguing that teachers and administrators have an ethical responsibility and duty to recognize and value diversity and to understand that they are positioned to work for equity and social justice in schools and society. "When professionals practice ethical leadership in culturally competent ways, those students and families served can reap the benefits of our educational system and achieve academic success" (Ingram & Morehead, 2007, n.p.).

Broader Pedagogy To Teach Diversity and Social Justice

As teachers, we believe that all good education connects critical theory with reflection and action, which is what Freire (1970) defined as praxis. As cultural workers, we embrace broader pedagogy that encompasses critical reflection, consciousness-rising, and purpose-defining strategies, which can lead to activist interventions that bring about socially just transformation (Freire, 1970). Responsive to the teachings of Giroux (1992) and Freire (1998), adopting broader pedagogy engages students with the multiple codes and references that

constitute truths. Pedagogy such as this means teaching students not only to read/understand these multiple codes and references critically, but also to learn the limits of such codes and references, including the ones they use to construct their own worldviews (Giroux, 2006). Broader pedagogy engages critical reflection and critical discourse, whereby the learner is able to engage knowledge as a *border-crosser*, a person moving in and out of borders constructed around coordinates of difference and power. Giroux (2006) describes border crossing:

These are not only physical borders they are cultural borders historically constructed and socially organized with maps of rules and regulations that limit and enable particular identities, individual capacities, and social forms. In this case, students cross over into borders of meaning, maps of knowledge, social relations, and values that are increasingly being negotiated and rewritten as the codes and regulations which organize them become destabilized and reshaped. Border pedagogy decenters as it remaps. The terrain of learning becomes inextricably linked to the shifting parameters of place, identity, history, and power. (p. 210)

Introducing the Social Justice Critical Reflection Model (SJCRM)

The pedagogical framework of the theoretical SJCRM facilitates critical thinking about diversity and social justice. In developing the framework of the SJCRM to teach diversity and social justice, we need to articulate what we mean by the terms *diversity* and *social justice*. We define diversity in a social context as the wide range of people who have unique characteristics in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, native language, values, beliefs, and socioeconomic status. Social justice refers to the conditions in society in which all members have the same basic rights, security, opportunities, obligations, social benefits, and the way in which human rights are manifested in the everyday lives of people at every level of society. Diversity and social justice are significant foundations from which teachers and administrators work (Cochran-Smith, 2004).

The Social Justice Critical Reflection Model (SJCRM) is a literature-based curriculum model that considers both *context* and *purpose* to teach about diversity and social justice. The research has long supported the value of literature as a tool for teaching (Rosenblatt, 1938; Taylor, 1997). Encounters with literature enable both an *efferent stance*, allowing the reader to obtain bits of information to keep, as well as, an *aesthetic stance*, which, more appropriately, attains to dialogic thinking (Rosenblatt, 1978). Reading works of literature engages the imagination and introduces readers to people who are both like and different from themselves in time, location, and sociopolitical contexts

and offers lenses for viewing the deleterious effects of poverty and culturally constructed discrimination that are deeply rooted in racism (Walters, 2006) and allows readers to experience the anguish, feelings, hopes, and emotions of other people. Moreover, literature serves as a teacher “through the systematic process for learning the essential meanings of that teacher” (Paul & Elder, 2006, p. 7). Works of literature as *the teacher* can stretch the mind to derive awareness that dominant forces have shaped us. When one begins to read and understand historical ideas and contexts, they develop the capacity to think historically. When they begin to read and understand political ideas and contexts, they can begin to think politically. When they begin to read and understand social ideas and contexts, they begin to think socially (Paul & Elder, 2006). The five interrelated schemata of the SJCRM to develop this awareness are: (1) descriptive thinking, (2) dialogic thinking, (3) critical reflection, (4) critical conscious, and (5) praxis. The visual conceptualization of the SJCRM is depicted in Figure 1.

An Overview of the Five SJCRM Interrelated Schemata

Descriptive Thinking

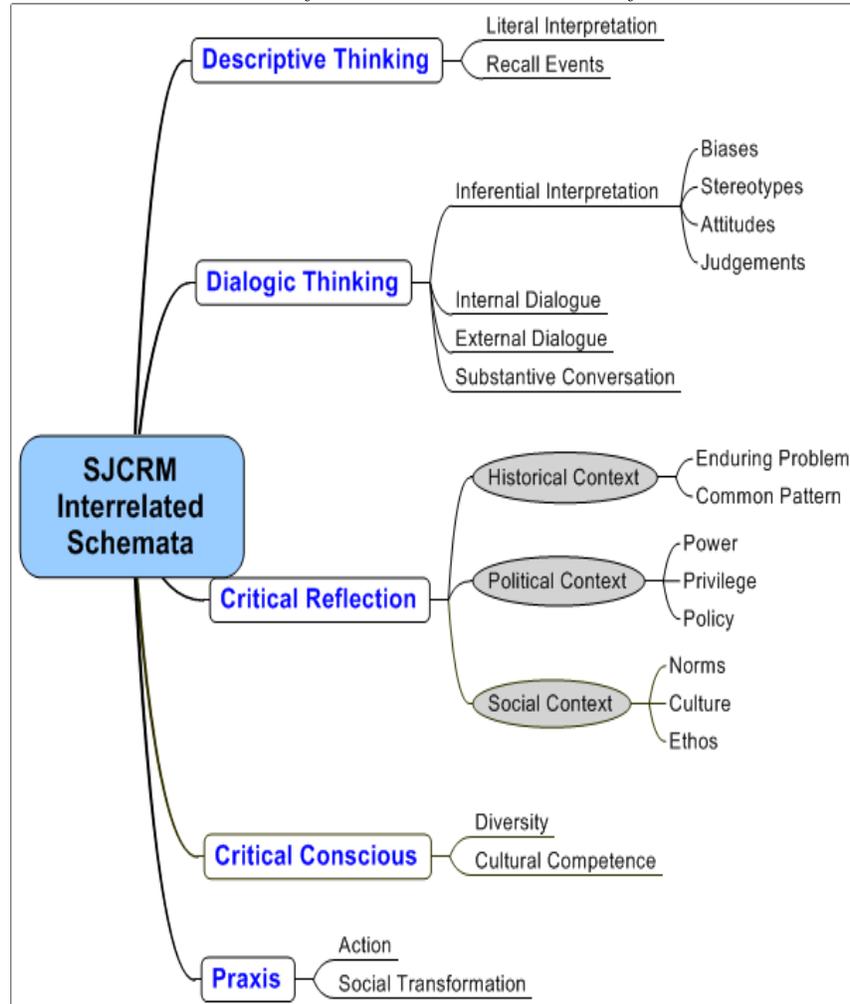
Descriptive thinking is that which results in merely a literal reading of a piece of writing whereby the surface information is most apparent and readily recalled and/or repeated. Descriptive thinking is void of the attempt to provide reasons or justifications for situations, events, and actions. It is undialectic, linear, dualistic, and ahistorical. Descriptive thinking is insufficient or limited in the overall scope of learning and the potentials of using learned information.

Dialogic Thinking

Dialogic thinking is beyond descriptive thinking. It invokes inferential interpretations that house the substances for the internal and external conversations that one has with self and others with respect to patterns of biases, stereotypes, attitudes, core values, and judgments. Yet, it must be clear from the onset, that at times *descriptive* thinking and *dialogic* thinking may appear hierarchical, however, they may also occur in reverse order. The internal dialogues may remain within, but more often than not, they become the breath-filled external dialogues about family, community, faith, schooling, culture, gender, socialization patterns, and ethnicity. When Sonia Nieto speaks of her granddaughter, she provides a cogent example for thinking dialogically:

Figure 1

The Interrelated Schemata of the Social Justice Critical Reflection Model



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My granddaughter is African American, Puerto Rican, Native American, French Canadian, Jamaican; she's all those things. Culturally, she's more Puerto Rican and Spanish since my husband is Spanish more than anything else. But I want people to recognize that it's not easy to categorize kids just by what they look like. People might look at her and say she's African American or she's Puerto Rican. Yes, she is those things, but she is more. And so we can't just have these antiquated notions of identity anymore of what race means and culture means. We need to have a more sophisticated and complemented understanding of these issues. (Alvarez, McBride, & Namioka, 2007)

The depth and breadth of Nieto's granddaughter's lineage speaks volumes to the dialogic thinking that consciously and subconsciously influences grandmother and granddaughter. Dialogic thinking is dynamic for all even when one's being is not as easily identified as those of Nieto's granddaughter. Nevertheless, those combined and interactive aspects, of who we are and how we came to be, influence the dialogues of the way we think.

Critical Reflection

Critical reflection is a concept introduced in teacher education over a century ago by Dewey (1933). A key issue that emerged from Dewey's work in this area is the degree that reflective thought must consider the wider historical, cultural, and political context for framing and reframing problems to which solutions are being sought - a process that he identifies as critical reflection (Dewey, 1933). The critically reflective thinking that he advocates promotes democratic processes that become educative and transformative (Dewey, 1916). Ryan (2005) cast a contemporary slant on critical reflection. He asserts that critical reflection means becoming more skeptical toward established truths. "It requires skills that allow one to discern the basis of truth claims, the assumptions underlying assertions, and the interests that motivate people to promote certain positions" (p. 11). Critical reflection that calls to the surface social structures and practices, particularly as circumstances place people in unequal and exploitative circumstances, is complex. Because people are all products of cultural conditioning, critical reflection challenges the rigidity that makes views and beliefs seemingly certain.

To consider that earlier beliefs and imprinting have to be revised or abandoned requires habits of mind of openness, skepticism, and suspended judgment. The deconstruction of schema is a labor-intensive journey that begins with examining one's own values, beliefs, and dispositions. This process begins with self-analysis by asking questions. What do I package as knowledge? How have I constructed ways of knowing? How do I validate truth claims? How do I test my schemata for moral reasoning? The deconstruction of historical, political, and socioeconomic views can be problematic and the need to provide a

safe, respectful, and supportive climate for critical reflection must be a consideration.

Critical Conscious

Critical conscious is imperative to diversity awareness and understanding. Our personal beliefs about the need for educators to cultivate a critical conscious are based on the premises that the race disparity that exists in student achievement and the lack of focus on diversity training in college of education preparation programs are interconnected. As we gain more knowledge and understanding about who we are as people and our personal systems of influencing factors and learn more about the cultures of others, we develop *cultural conscious* and the ability to work collaboratively and interact effectively with groups of people in cross-cultural situations (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989).

Inasmuch as teachers and administrators must gain some knowledge and understanding of other cultures, against the framework of the SJCRM, cultural conscious is acquired through personal reflection about one's beliefs, biases, stereotypes, influences, roots, values, affiliations, and through shared similar dialogues with others (King, 1995; Tatum, 1997; Hilliard, 1999; Singleton & Linton, 2006). Simply put, cultural conscious must be manifested in the everyday lives and practices of teachers and administrators.

Praxis

Praxis, the application of knowledge and skills, defines the substance of teaching. When, and only when, theory leads to practical and habitual application that leads to social transformation does it become praxis (Freire, 1970). Within the SJCRM the deconstruction of schema and reformulation of schema become essential transformations for praxis. Why? Essentially, while imprinted conventions and habits may be likened to comfortable shoes, logically speaking, one pair cannot last for a lifetime because, at some point, they will no longer fit, wear out, or be unsuitable, in spite of the level of comfort they once provided. Praxis, like the shoes in the above scenario, necessitates the active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge, truth claims, and what motivates people to promote certain positions. More recently, conceptualization for effective learning and teaching has focused on how educators come to know content and develop as lifelong learners; and resuscitate their understanding for teaching in light of the content and the learners to be taught (Howard, 1999; Gay, 2000; Bransford, *et al.*, 2005). Educational praxis must lead to dismantling policies and practices that advantage some students and impede the success of others.

Moving Forward from Personal Experiences

Though personal experiences do not constitute a theoretical model, they certainly provide the grounded understanding that supports our development of the SJCRM. Now, we share partial journeys of personally moving forward using the SJCRM to teach diversity and social justice.

Ilene's Story

My career in education spans four decades, serving as an elementary and middle school teacher, and middle and high school administrator. I came to higher education knowing that schools can be unhappy places for students situated at the margins and the supposition that *all* children can learn is more dogma than belief and actual practice. My role as a faculty member in the Department of Educational Leadership includes teaching both master's level and education specialist curriculum. In my department, educational leadership preparation consists of both leadership theory and school administration techniques. I am well aware that among the areas important to the training of principals, such training is generally silent on issues of diversity and social justice.

In my role as a teacher and world citizen, I concur with Greene (1995) that, "In the domains of education today, people can choose to resist the thoughtlessness, banality, technical rationality, carelessness, and *savage inequalities* [Kozol, 1991] that now undermine public education" (p. 2), and negatively influences the outcomes for those students traditionally situated at the margins in society. Greene (1995) comments:

We acknowledge the harshness of situations only when we have in mind another state of affairs in which things would be better. Similarly, it may only be when we think of humane and liberating classrooms in which every learner is recognized and sustained in her or his struggle to learn how to learn that we can perceive the insufficiency of bureaucratized, uncaring schools. And it may be only then that we are moved to choose to repair or to renew. (p. 5)

With very few exceptions, my educational administration students are White, middle class, and their place in society advantages their *whiteness* even if they do not seek race-based benefits. They do not see or admit to the impact and the pervasiveness of racism and White privilege in schools and therefore cannot address these issues. In my educational administrative courses, each class meeting is devoted to discussions about the key role of the principal and the day-to-day issues that influence schools and effect students' learning. During the course of too many class discussions, my students' own miseducation, biases, stereotypes, and prejudices surface. For example, a student stated:

Among the different minority groups of students entering U. S. schools today, teachers would much rather teach Asian students because they are better learners and harder workers in comparison to other minority student groups.

In another class discussion, one student said:

In my formerly all White student body high school, African American and Hispanic students could not adjust to an all white school environment and turned the school campus into a battle ground where fighting between the minority and White students are common occurrences.

During another class discussion, surprising numbers of students shared the belief that it was all right for their suburban school districts to require a teacher workday without students in attendance on the nationally recognized Dr. Martin Luther King (MLK) Jr. Holiday. In fact, there was general agreement among the students in the class that when school districts did not recognize the MLK holiday and required teachers to report to work without students in attendance, teachers could still remember Dr. King and his legacy of social justice in their minds and hearts. Perhaps a well meaning thought, but clearly off the mark.

Given these observations, I understood the need to move my students beyond their very limited personal schemata and misinformed worldviews. Rather than just teaching them about the theories and techniques of educational leadership, I considered the greater need to foster changes in consciousness through pedagogy that addressed omissions in my students' schooling experiences and their views of minority and poor children as deficient and in need of improvement. As an individual teacher, one year away from tenure eligibility, I asked myself what is the value of engaging White, middle class, educational administration students in dialogues about diversity and social justice that they may not realize and understand; and what might I realistically expect as a result of such engagement?

What I am describing here is my belief that valuing diversity and social justice is central to the work of educational administrators. The worldviews of my students needed to be challenged rather than simply overlooked or taken-for-granted. Thus, my goal was to teach the skills educational administration students must have to challenge established truths, including their own, in the hope that they would become critical thinkers and public dissidents, and thereby, advocates for social justice. I realized the risk-taking involved, as did other minority scholars in predominately White institutions who teach and research in the areas of diversity and social justice (Ladson-Billings, 1996; Ringo, 2006).

Beginning with these critical premises, I considered how I would teach my students to deconstruct their biased worldviews, address matters of diversity, systemic educational inequity, and the ways principals create equitable

circumstances for those student groups who are traditionally disadvantaged by schools and school processes. I elected to use literature to teach diversity and social justice, in part, because literature would capture my students' attention more readily than a textbook on leadership theories and techniques. Also, a work of literature can readily lend itself to critical inquiry, self-reflection, and border crossing (Giroux, 2006).

I selected poetry to cultivate this awareness. I did so because poetry provides a rich reservoir of autobiographical data laden with critical theory and political commentary on issues such as racism, discrimination, poverty, segregation, access, homophobia, and classism. Knowing that if I was to help students deconstruct and reconstruct their personal schemata, works of poetry had to challenge the privileging of scientific staging and truth claims. First, poems had to provide the awareness that action and events are located in and explicated by reference to historical, economic, and sociopolitical context. Second, poems had to provide the staging for critical dialogues among my students about diversity and social justice. Lastly, poems had to stir my students to move beyond their taken-for-granted ways of knowing and being, and in some cases their indifference and apathy, to advocate for more socially just schooling experiences for all students. Over a semester that encompassed fourteen weeks some of the poems that I used to teach diversity and social justice included: "We Wear the Mask" (Dunbar, 1984), "I Am A Clown" (Bernier-Grand, 2004), "Mother to Son" (Hughes, 1959), and "The Hangman" (Ogden, n.d.).

Toni's Story

I have been teaching reading methods courses at the undergraduate, master, and doctoral level for more than twenty years within a career that spans four decades enriched by teaching elementary and secondary students in the public schools. Those collective pedagogical experiences substantiate the rationale for this current work. They complement my interest and passion for literature for children and adolescents as viable reading materials to promote learning to read, writing, and content subject instruction. My literacy education students are predominantly White with a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. It is reasonable to say that the majority, have lived White privilege. Among my students are those who are amenable to learning about teaching what they do not know (Howard, 1999). Others are becoming conscious of the influence of their own racial and ethnic identities on their practices as teachers (McIntyre, 1997). Still there are those students undergoing denial or resistance that there is any worthwhile connection for them to think beyond their all-knowing way of seeing the world.

In my literacy classes there are also a few students who are African Americans, others of color, recent immigrants, and international students; the average is 0-5% in each class, each semester, over more semesters than I can count; they too, bring socioeconomic ranges and cultural and ethnic perspectives to the classroom environment. Thus, Gates' interpretation, as cited in Giroux (1992), summarily is appropriate for almost all the students within literacy classes at my institution as well as those elsewhere, in that they have been impacted by the disciplines, pedagogies, institutional structures, or forms of scholarship that are tainted by the messy values of worldly interests.

Appreciating what literature can do. Literature framing discrimination, degradation, segregation, and the realities of human interactions resulting from the complex interconnectedness of each, segues pertinence to the SJCRM. Specifically, literature endorsed for children and adolescents represents texts that can substantially inform, enrich, extend as well as challenge social justice knowledge bases that teachers bring to their instructional literacy practices for all children. Over the years in my graduate courses on teaching writing in the elementary and secondary schools, any number of books for children and adolescents have been required and selected readings because they are fine writing models with rich examples of historical fiction and nonfiction. It is literature that reveals events through pictorial prose and illustrations of people and times marginally known or unknown to many.

In recent years, the following have been among the books that my graduate students have been expected to read independently, followed-up with in-class reader response discussions: *Mississippi Trial, 1955* (Crowe, 2002), *Daniel's Story* (Matas, 1993), *The Legend of Buddy Bush* (Moses, 2003), *Fireflies in the Dark: The Story of Freidl-Dicker Brandeis and the Children of Terezin* (Rubin, 2000), *Separate But Not Equal* (Haskins, 1998), *Rising Voices* (Hirschfelder & Singer, 1993), *The Journey* (Hamanaka, 1990), *Black Angels* (Murphy, 2001), *The Red Rose Box* (Woods, 2002), *The Color of My Words* (Joseph, 2000), *Images of America: The Tuskegee Airmen* (Homan & Reilly, 1998), and *The Shadow Children* (Schnur, 1994).

It is quite common for my graduate students, who are practicing teachers, to voice how much they have learned from a particular book. For example, this was part of Amanda's response to *Mississippi Trial, 1955*.

Going through an affluent school district and then graduating from college, I consider myself an educated person. I was shocked that the information was new to me. I had never heard of Emmett Till.

With respect to *Images of America: the Tuskegee Airmen*, teacher Marsha wrote the following:

I was frustrated and annoyed until about halfway through the book because I couldn't connect to the purpose of the assignment. I do not recall when or what made me realize why I was reading about these fascinating and forgotten people, but I soon grew upset about my complete lack of knowledge of the Tuskegee Airmen. Why did I not know a thing about them? Why weren't they in my history books as a student? Why weren't these people better known and celebrated? Of the hundreds and thousands of books about World War II, why such a tiny fraction about the Tuskegee Airmen? I cannot tell you how much it frustrated me that I had never heard of them.

After reading and discussing with peers about *The Journey*, teacher Mathew wrote:

As I read about the Japanese concentration camps in America, I began to relate their persecution to the removal of Native Americans to reservations and the Arab American detainees at Guantanamo Bay.

These examples represent a host of many others that illustrate the social justice learning potential that adolescent and children's literature provides concurrently with the development of reading and writing pedagogical acumen during graduate education. I teach literacy education. Through encounters with children's literature, my goal is to stretch the minds of my graduate students so that they demonstrate cultural competence and are responsive to the tenets of social justice.

Discussion

The primary purpose of this paper was to introduce the theoretical SJCRM that we developed. We are unwavering in our belief that teachers and principals play key roles in students' success. Therefore, teachers and principals must value diversity and the awareness of ways schools as formal organizations historically and systemically limit life opportunities and marginalize particular groups. In fact, we teach so that our students endeavor to understand all forms of prejudice, oppression, racism, discrimination, and the implications for students whose identities subject them to marginalization in schools and society.

In our respective disciplines, educational administration and literacy education, we have elected to use literature to guide the interrelated schema of the SJCRM while at the same time sustaining a focus toward developing the unique leadership attributes pertinent to our particular degree programs. It should be understood that, while the literature-based SJCRM that we developed appears hierarchal relative to descriptive thinking, dialogic thinking, critical reflection, critical conscious, and praxis, it is recursive in nature. Further, one,

two, three, and, in some cases, even ten or more opportunities that evoke reflections about either one or any combination of realities of racism, White privilege, economic advantages and disadvantages, and social justice may or may not move a person to engage in thoughtful introspection about self and the *shoes another may walk in*. Logically and judiciously, the SJCRM should be viewed, as other curriculums deemed integral to educators' development, as it serves several different functions. First, it can promote the richness of diverse literature as curriculum. Second, it forces educators to examine their own values and beliefs about what schools should be doing and what their own mission ought to be. Third, the SJCRM calls for higher levels of critical self-reflection. Fourth, it engages the learner in intellectual processes and shared dialogue that challenges thinking and invites modification and adjustment of personal schemata.

As with any instruction, particularly true of the college undergraduate and graduate classrooms, assessment occurs through papers, examinations, presentations, or some other form of evidence-based measures. Yet, the residual impact of learning is that which occurs over time in multiple applications of life's work and socialization practices. While there is a wealth of information about the benefits of literature for teaching children and adolescents about cultural differences, there is a dearth of research about the benefits of using literature to teach adults about diversity and social justice. Our belief is that the literature-based SJCRM proposed in this article can open doors of learning with the potential for future processes of transformation that infuses social justice into one's relationship with others in a global society.

Over the course of developing the theoretical SJCRM we have come to understand that teaching in the areas of diversity and social justice is challenging. As we have traveled on this journey, four score years collectively, our goal of preparing teachers and administrators to recognize and understand how they are positioned to create democratic and socially just schools requires that we engage broader pedagogy in order to continue the dialogue that may result in our students' educational praxis - that which dismantles policies and practices that advantage some students and impedes the success of others. The SJCRM provides such a framework for our continuing teaching interest and research in the areas of diversity and social justice and the teaching and research conducted by others.

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